INTRO. TO PHILOSOPHY

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MWF 10:00am-10:50am
Room: Boynton 212
Office Hrs: MW: 11-12pm & 1-2pm; TR 12:30-2pm, & Fri: 11-12pm

SYLLABUS

I. Text


II. Course Description

This course is concerned with the general goals, nature, and methods of philosophy. More specifically we will focus on issues concerning philosophical theories of knowledge and reality. Our readings for this semester include: the problem of skepticism and knowledge; the natures of mind and of the external world; and arguments regarding the nature and existence of God.

III. General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes

General Education Core Curriculum
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

By enrolling in Philosophy 153, Introduction to Philosophy, you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Personal Responsibility requirement. You will see this course on your D2L list.

At one point during the semester, you will receive an assignment that fulfills both the requirements of this course and the needs of Stephen F. Austin State University’s Core Curriculum Assessment Plan with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. When you complete this one assignment, you need to hand in the assignment in class and upload the assignment into the D2L “Core Curriculum” dropbox. The Core Curriculum dropbox will be identified by the Objective for which work is being collected (i.e., Personal Responsibility). Please note that this only applies to the approved assignment. All other assignments should be submitted according to regular class operations. If you
have any questions, please see your Instructor or the Office of Student Learning and Institutional Assessment.

Again, when you complete the assignment mentioned above, you will hand in your assignment in class and the Personal Responsibility dropbox.

If you have any questions, please see your instructor or contact the Institutional Effectiveness Office at (936) 468-1130.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to the D2L Personal Responsibility dropbox this semester, and the date the assignment should be uploaded to the D2L Personal Responsibility dropbox. Not every assignment will be submitted for core assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment must be submitted for assessment in the D2L Personal Responsibility dropbox.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in D2L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>“Assessment Assignment”</td>
<td>March 29th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. **Program Learning Outcomes**

This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course.

V. **Exemplary Educational Objectives**

1. Awareness of the scope and variety of texts dealing with philosophical issues.
2. Understanding of the historical and social contexts of philosophical movements.
3. Ability to respond critically to works in philosophy.
4. Ability to formulate, express, and support arguments on philosophical issues.
5. Knowledge of the cross-cultural influence of philosophy.

VI. **Student Learning Outcomes**

**Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Assignment:**

PHI 153 is part of the university’s Core Curriculum. As such, the work assigned in this course recognizes the general goals of the core and the specific objectives attached to those classes designated for inclusion in the Language, Philosophy, and Culture Foundational Component Area as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Understand the role that personal responsibility has played throughout history and gain the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to making ethical decisions.
VII. Acceptable Student Behavior

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

VIII. Attendance/Participation

An important part of doing philosophy is participating in an exchange of ideas. Several things follow from this: (1) In order to participate in class discussion, you must do the readings assigned (you will find a tentative course calendar on the pages that follow)—your responsibility is to make sure you have already read the material we will discuss in class for each of our particular meetings. (2) In order to participate in class, you obviously have to be present in class. Thus, you will only be allowed two unexcused absences during the semester without having your grade affected. Beginning with your third such absence, you will have four points taken away from your overall point total each time you are absent. So please, don’t miss class!

IX. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp
X. Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

XI. Students with Disabilities

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

XII. Grading Policy: Exams and Assessment Assignment

Your course grade will be determined by how well you do on the following:

- Assessment Assignment (5% of grade)
- First Exam (30% of grade)
- Mid-term (30% of grade)
- Final (35% of grade)

*If at the end of the term your point total puts you on the borderline between two grades, your frequent class participation will give you the higher grade.

The questions on each exam will be some combination of multiple choice and true/false.

PHI 153 Assessment Instrument

Instrument: Epistemology Paper

During the unit on Epistemology, students will construct a written assignment that will dovetail with the specific epistemological theories covered in that section of the course. The assignment will be a single essay that is step driven and may be described to the students in the manner seen below. While the sample directions below break the assignment into steps, this is a single essay and will be uploaded for each objective.

Student Directions:

During the unit on Epistemology, each student will complete and turn in a written assignment. The stylistic requirements for the assignment will be the completion of a four
to five page essay that is stylistically clean and displays academic citation of all source material. The work will be typed and will include a works cited page. While the content requirements have been broken down into a series of steps that build upon one another and thus highlight our learning process (see below), this is to be written as a single, cohesive essay. The content steps are:

1) As you have been introduced to a number of epistemological theories during the last several weeks, you are to choose TWO of those theories and provide a critical evaluation of each theory. Upon identifying and explaining each theory, you will then critically evaluate each theory.

2) Next, you will transition from a direct analysis of an epistemological theory to an indirect analysis of a third theory. In this case, you are to either design your own cartoon or find a cartoon online that you believe comments on a third epistemological. After providing the cartoon, you will write an analysis of this image in which you identify and explain how the cartoon, in terms of its context and assumptions, comments on this third epistemological theory.

3) Finally, you will conclude your paper with a personal discussion in which you identify the epistemological theory that you find most convincing and then critically explore how your choosing that theory will impact your own ethical self awareness in different contexts and your cultural self-awareness as it is tied to such issues as civic responsibility or understanding your role in a regional, national, or global community. (This will directly tie-in to the Personal Responsibility rubric.)

As you can see from the description, this assignment interconnects with the Core Curriculum Objectives and will be used as part of the core assessment process. Therefore, you need to make yourself familiar with and work towards accomplishing those goals found on the rubric for Personal Responsibility; this rubric can be found at: http://www.sfasu.edu/acadaffairs/114.asp. This rubric will be used to assess your essay.

XIII. Tentative Course Calendar

Week 1: January. 22-25 Chapter 1: Powerful Ideas

Week 2: Jan. 28-February. 1 Chapter 1: Powerful Ideas cont.

Week 3: Feb. 4-8 Chapter 2: The Pre-Socratics

Week 4: Feb. 11-15 Chapter 3: Socrates, Plato

Week 5: Feb. 18-22 Chapter 4: Aristotle

Week 6: Feb. 25-March 1 Chapter 5: Philosophers of the Hellinistic and Christian Eras
Week 7: March 4-8  **Exam #1 is on Monday, March 4\textsuperscript{th}**  
Chapter 6: The Rise of Modern Metaphysics and Epistemology

Week 8: Mar. 11-15  **We will discuss the assessment assignment on March 15\textsuperscript{th}**  
Chapter 6: The Rise of Modern Metaphysics and Epistemology cont.

Week 9: Mar. 18-22  **No Classes, Spring Break**

Week 10: Mar. 25-29  **Assessment Assignment uploaded by March 29\textsuperscript{th}**.  
Chapter 7: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Week 11: April 1-5  
Chapter 7: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries cont.

Week 12: Apr. 8-12  
Chapter 7: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries cont.  
Chapter 8: The Continental Tradition

Week 13: Apr. 15-17  **Midterm is on Wednesday, April 17\textsuperscript{th} (No class the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th}, Easter Break)**  
Chapter 8: The Continental Tradition cont.

Week 14: Apr. 22-26  
Chapter 13: Philosophy and Belief in God

Week 15: Apr. 29-May 3  
Chapter 13: Philosophy and Belief in God cont.

Week 16: May 6-10  
Chapter 13: Philosophy and Belief in God cont.

**Our University Scheduled Final Exam is Monday, May 13\textsuperscript{th} 10:30-12:30pm.**